

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY VIENNA PRIORITY

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FOLLOWING REPEAT STATE 131500 ACTION BELGRADE BUCHAREST BONN
COPENHAGEN LONDON MADRID MOSCOW OTTAWA PARIS ROME STOCKHOLM OECD
PARIS WARSAW GENEVA BUENOS AIRES MEXICO RIO DE JANEIRO TAIPEI
TOKYO NEW DELHI TEHRAN TEL AVIV ABIDJAN IAEA VIENNA HELSINKI
BERN EC BRUSSELS TOKYO USERDA DATED 5 JUN 75

QUOTE

UNCLAS STATE 131500

FOR SCIENCE ATTACHES AND ERDA REPS

E.O. 11652:N/A/D

TAGS:TECH

SUBJECT:PHILADELPHIA ELECTRIC REDUCES POWER LEVEL OF UNIT
3 AT PEACH BOTTOM NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

REFERENCE: REFTEL A-2467

1. PHILADELPHIA ELECTRIC COMPANY HAS REDUCED POWER AND
COOLANT FLOW AT UNIT 3 OF THE PEACH BOTTOM NUCLEAR POWER
STATION IN YODRICK COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA, TO NO MORE THAN 50
PERCENT OF AUTHORIZED LIMITS FOLLOWING INDICATIONS OF
POSSIBLE VIBRATION OF INSTRUMENT TUBES WITHIN THE REACTOR.

2. THE COMPANY DECIDED TO MAKE THE REDUCTIONS AFTER SPECIAL
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INSTRUMENT CHECKS REFLECTED DEVIATIONS WHICH MIGHT INDICATE

VIBRATION OF INSTRUMENTS KNOWN AS TRAVERSING INCORE PROBES (TIP) USED FOR NEUTRON MONITORING. OPERATING AT LOWER POWER AND COOLANT FLOW REDUCES THE VIBRATION AND PROVIDES AN ADEQUATE MARGIN OF SAFETY. A CONFIRMATORY ORDER HAS BEEN ISSUED BY THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION.

3. ON APRIL 26 NEBRASKA PUBLIC POWER DISTRICT REDUCED POWER AND FLOW AT ITS COOPER STATION NUCLEAR PLANT TO NO MORE THAN 50 PERCENT AFTER INDICATIONS OF POSSIBLE VIBRATION. ON MAY

17 IOWA ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY MADE A SIMILAR REDUCTION AT ITS DUANE ARNOLD PLANT.

4. BECAUSE MORE DATA IS NEEDED ON THE POSSIBLE INSTRUMENT VIBRATION AND ANY RESULTING EFFECTS, IOWA ELECTRIC LIGHT AND POWER COMPANY PLANS TO SHUT DOWN THE DUANE ARNOLD PLANT LATER THIS WEEK, INSPECT FOR POSSIBLE DAMAGE AND MAKE REPAIRS AS NECESSARY BEFORE RETURNING TO POWER. THE PLANT WILL BE DOWN ABOUT ONE MONTH. BEFORE CLOSING DOWN, THE REACTOR WILL BE OPERATED BRIEFLY AT FULL POWER DURING THREE DAYS OF TESTS TO OBTAIN ADDITIONAL OPERATING DATA FOR COMPARISON WITH RESULTS OF THE VISUAL INSPECTION TO BE CONDUCTED AFTER SHUTDOWN. THE COMPANY WILL MAINTAIN CLOSE SURVEILLANCE OF THE INCORE INSTRUMENTATION DURING THE CONDUCT OF THE TESTS, KEEPING THE NRC ADVISED THROUGHOUT THE PERIOD.

5. FOLLOWING THE INDICATIONS OF POSSIBLE VIBRATION AT THE COOPER PLANT IN NEBRASKA LAST MONTH THE NRC DIRECTED OPERATORS OF THEN OTHER NUCLEAR PLANTS OF SIMILAR DESIGN TO MAKE SPECIAL CHECKS FOR POSSIBLE INSTRUMENT TUBE VIBRATION. THE NRC STAFF IS EVALUATING DATA FROM THE PLANTS AS THEY ARE RECEIVED.

6. GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY, MANUFACTURER OF THE REACTORS, IS ENGAGED IN AN INTENSIVE EFFORT TO DEVELOP FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE INDICATED PROBLEM. GE REPRESENTATIVES HAVE MET WITH NRC STAFF ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS TO PROVIDE DATA. GE HAS SAID ITS PRELIMINARY INFORMATION INDICATES THAT THE FLOW OF COOLING WATER THROUGH BYPASS HOLES IN UNCLASSIFIED

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THE PLATE SUPPORTING THE REACTOR CORE MAY BE INDUCING MOVEMENT OF THE INSTRUMENT COMPONENTS SUFFICIENT TO CONTACT THE CORNERS OF THE CHANNEL BOXES, POSSIBLY CAUSING WEAR AND CRACKING. CHANNEL BOXES ARE STRUCTURES AROUND BUNDLES OF FUEL RODS THAT HELP CONDUCT THE FLOW OF WATER PAST THE BUNDLES AND THROUGH THE CORE.

7. EMBASSY SCIENCE ATTACHES ARE ASKED TO PASS THE ABOVE

INFORMATION TO NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION TECHNICAL
NOTIFICATION ADDRESSEES (SEE OUR REFTel A-2467) KISSINGER
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